

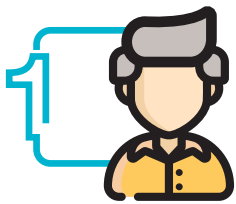


3 simple checks to support your residents.

For personal care workers in residential aged care.

People with dementia often have changes in their behaviour. They can be aggressive, shout, wander, change their sleep pattern or seem anxious. These changed behaviours can come and go. This is common, but it can be upsetting for the person, for their family, and for you as their personal care worker.

You understand your resident – their personality, history, likes and dislikes. You can try to manage these behaviours safely without medication using these 3 simple checks.



Check in with your resident.

Health

- Are they in pain?
- Could they have an infection, teeth problems, constipation, headache, not enough sleep, side effects from medication, vision or hearing problems?
- Are they hungry or thirsty, or do they need to use the toilet?

Background

- Has their routine been changed?
- Do they miss family, friends or pets?
- Is there a key event or anniversary?
- Have they experienced loss or trauma?
- Do they have any cultural or spiritual traditions that they want to do?

Environment

- Inside – is the room the right size, too bright, too noisy? Enough privacy and personal space?
- Outside – are there interesting things to do? Shade, shelter, seats, safe pathways? Can they get in and out easily?

Think about what they really need and what they're trying to tell you. Here are some ideas:

Feelings

- Are they bored, depressed, anxious or lonely?
- Are their spiritual needs being met?

Activities

- When does the changed behaviour happen?
- Have they had too much or not enough activity?
- Meals – are they at the right time, with food and company the person enjoys? Is the table setting confusing for them?
- Personal care time – is the bathroom too cold or uncomfortable?
- General activities – are they feeling too rushed?
- Are there too many people around?
- Are their cultural, spiritual and gender preferences being respected?

Communication

- Are you speaking slowly and calmly, using their preferred name?
- Making eye contact?
- Acknowledging their concerns?
- Not arguing, correcting mistakes or trying to reason with the person?



Check the care plan.

Has this behaviour happened before? How did people manage it, and what worked? Write down what you try too, so you can help the next person.



Check with your co-workers.

Still not sure how to support your resident? Talk to your co-workers and your supervisor.

Dementia Support Australia has experts who can help – call 1800 699 799.